

Additional Technical Assistance Source

Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs)

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) administers the Small Business Development Center Program to provide management assistance to current and prospective small business owners. SBDCs offer one-stop assistance to small businesses by providing a wide variety of information and guidance in central and easily accessible branch locations. The program is a cooperative effort of the private sector, the educational community and federal, state and local governments. It enhances economic development by providing small businesses with management and technical assistance.

There are SBDCs in every state, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands -- with a network of nearly 1,000 service locations. In each state there is a lead organization which sponsors the SBDC and manages the program. The lead organization coordinates program services offered to small businesses through a network of subcenters and satellite locations in each state. Subcenters are located at colleges, universities, community colleges, vocational schools, chambers of commerce and economic development corporations. SBDC assistance is tailored to the local community and the needs of individual clients. Each center develops services in cooperation with local SBA district offices to ensure statewide coordination with other available resources.

What the Program Does

The SBDC Program is designed to deliver up-to-date counseling, training and technical assistance in all aspects of small business management. SBDC services include, but are not limited to, assisting small businesses with financial, marketing, production, organization, engineering and technical problems and feasibility studies. Special SBDC programs and economic development activities include international trade assistance, technical assistance, procurement assistance, venture capital formation and rural development. The SBDCs also make special efforts to reach minority members of socially and economically disadvantaged groups, veterans, women and the disabled. Assistance is provided to both current or potential small business owners. They also provide assistance to small businesses applying for Small Business Innovation and Research (SBIR) grants from federal agencies. Assistance from an SBDC is available to anyone interested in beginning a small business for the first time or improving or expanding an existing small business, who cannot afford the services of a private consultant.

For more information regarding SBDCs, visit their website at <http://www.sba.gov/SBDC>.

Small Business Administration (SBA)

In addition to the SBDC Program, the SBA has a variety of other programs and services available. They include training and educational programs, advisory services, publications, financial programs and contract assistance. The agency also offers specialized programs for women business owners, minorities, veterans, international trade and rural development.

The SBA has offices located throughout the country. For the one nearest you, consult the telephone directory under "U.S. Government", or call the Small Business Answer Desk at 1-800-8-ASK-SBA or (202) 205-7064 (fax). For the hearing impaired, the TDD number is (202) 205-7333. All of SBA's Programs and services are provided to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis.

For more information regarding the SBA programs, visit <http://www.sba.gov>.

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)

The SCORE Association (Service Corps of Retired Executives) is a nonprofit association dedicated to entrepreneur education and the formation, growth and success of small business nationwide. SCORE is a resource partner with the Small Business Administration (SBA). SCORE Association volunteers serve as "Counselors to America's Small Business." Working and retired executives and business owners donate their time and expertise as volunteer business counselors. They provide confidential counseling and mentoring to small businesses free of charge.

The SCORE Association provides personalized, confidential one-to-one counseling to help people start and operate a successful small business. Working and retired executives and small business owners offer advice and one-to-one counseling sessions on topics such as developing a business plan, securing financing and managing business growth. Volunteers also coordinate low-cost seminars and workshops to provide entrepreneurs with additional training on specific business topics, such as how to set-up a home-based business. One-to-one and team counseling is provided to entrepreneurs at no charge.

For more information regarding SCORE, visit their website at <http://www.score.org>.



Office of Women's Business Ownership (OWBO) Program (OWBO)

SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership was established by Executive Order of President Carter in 1979 to aid and stimulate women's business enterprise. The OWBO's mission is to be an advocate for current and potential women business owners throughout the federal government and in the private sector. The office provides a network of training, counseling and mentoring services to help women start and/or expand businesses. It offers information about national and local resources to meet constituent needs. It creates program and policies that help women entrepreneurs become full partners in the national and global economies. The Office of Women's Business Ownership assists the increasing numbers of women business owners--those who are already successful entrepreneurs and those who are thinking of going into business. SBA programs designed specifically for women include the following:

- Demonstration Training Program
- Mentoring program
- Women's Prequalification Pilot Loan Program
- Interagency Committee on Women Business Enterprise

For more information regarding the OWBO program, visit their website at <http://www.sba.gov/womeninbusiness>

